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General Comment

[Edited by Gilbert Campbell Scoggin, The University of Missouri.]

Mr. J. A. R. Munro has been elected rector of Lincoln College, Oxford. Mr. Munro is known in connection with archaeological work in Asia Minor, and he has contributed numerous papers dealing with problems of Greek history to the *Journal of the Hellenic Society*. He succeeds the late W. W. Merry, everywhere known as editor of Homer and Aristophanes.

At the meeting of the Classical Club of Greater Boston, held at the Browne and Nichols School in Cambridge in December, the topic for consideration was "Internationalism in the Light of Classical Tradition." Professor W. S. Ferguson spoke on "Hellenistic Greece"; Professor Clifford H. Moore dealt with "Imperial Rome"; Mr. Ralph Adams Cram discussed "The Mediaeval World."

In the *Educational Review* for December, 1919, Professor John William Hewitt, of Wesleyan University, gives a very vivid account of a certain (Greek?) professor's experiences at Plattsburg. This paper, entitled "A Rat in a Strange Garret," depicts a man of such readiness in adapting himself to novel surroundings that it seems pretty clear that he has learned valuable lessons from Xenophon and the Ten Thousand.

On December 15 Viscount Grey addressed a gathering of students in the Harvard Union on the subject of "Recreation." From his own experience he spoke of the refreshing value of reading, showing how he had derived pleasure and advantage from Plato and Gibbon in his quiet hours. He also recounted in detail a delightful tramp in company with Colonel Roosevelt, devoted to the study of the songs of British birds.

A long article on "Vocabularies," contributed by Mr. J. A. Magni to the *Pedagogical Seminary* for September, 1919, concludes with the statement that "the classics are an aid in acquiring a vocabulary." This is declared to be self-evident; yet numerous tests are cited to show that persons knowing the classics possess larger vocabularies than do those who have no classical knowledge. Mr. Magni asserts confidently that even one or two years' study of the classics is valuable and quite worth while.

On November 14 the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Liberal Studies held a meeting in Houston Hall at the University of Pennsylvania. The program was as follows: "Harvard's Plight," by John Jay Chapman; "The Yellow Peril to English Speech," by Edward P. Mitchell; "On the Teaching of Greek and Latin," by Arthur C. McGiffert. The officers for the year are: president, George Depue Hadzsits; first vice-president, Harvey M. Watts; second vice-president, Laura H. Carnell; treasurer, Fred. J. Doolittle.

The departments of Greek and Latin of the University of Pennsylvania, in conjunction with the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Liberal Studies, provided for six public lectures and readings during November and December. The course arranged was as follows: "Homer," by Professor H. Lamar Crosby; "Euripides," by Professor William N. Bates; "Theocritus," by Professor W. W. Hyde; "Plautus," by Professor Roland G. Kent; "Horace," by Professor J. C. Rolfe; "Pliny," by Professor W. B. McDaniel. The lectures were brief and a large part of the hour was given to reading in translation from the authors.

The thirty-fourth annual meeting of the American Historical Association met at Cleveland, December 29-31. On the afternoon of the last day of meeting a joint conference was held of the sections of ancient and medieval history, with Professor A. E. R. Boak, of the University of Michigan, in the chair. The general subject for discussion was, "The Historical Background of Some of the Issues before the Peace Conference." The speakers were as follows: "German Historian and Macedonian Imperialism," John R. Knipfing, of the University of Michigan; "The Epirus-Albania Boundary Dispute in Ancient Times," Herbert Wing, Jr., of Dickinson College; "Roman Policy in Armenia and Its Significance," David Magie, of Princeton University.

The fifty-first annual meeting of the American Philological Association, in conjunction with the Archaeological Institute of America, was held at Pittsburgh, December 29-31. This meeting was originally planned for the University of Toronto, but owing to the appearance of smallpox in Toronto it was deemed advisable to make a change in the place of meeting. Papers were presented by many eminent classical scholars. At one of the joint sessions the general subject for discussion was "Archaeology and Classical Philology." The purpose of this session was "to outline the relations of archaeological excavation and research in the important parts of the ancient world to the classical philologist and his work." Among the speakers at this joint session was the president of our association, Professor Laing, who dealt with Italy.

Professor George E. Howes, since 1905 Garfield professor of ancient languages at Williams College, has recently been appointed dean of the college. Since 1917 Professor Howes has been connected with the Fuel Administration, and in January, 1919, he was made executive secretary. He was likewise made historian of the Fuel Administration, and in this capacity he has had charge of the report that is soon to be submitted to Congress. This report later will be published in several volumes. Before his appointment to the Garfield professorship Dean Howes was professor of Greek at the University of Vermont. He has been actively connected, as secretary-treasurer or as president, with the New England Classical Association ever since its organization in 1906. Professor M. N. Wetmore, of Williams College, has been appointed for the unexpired period as secretary-treasurer of the association, as Dean Howes felt forced to resign because of his heavy duties.

In *Education* for November, 1919, Mr. E. E. Cates, of Los Angeles, California, asks the question, "Are Our Schools Producing Results?" Probably no one else has any doubts about this matter, although there may be considerable difference of opinion as to whether the results be good or bad, satisfactory or unsatisfactory. He points out that the argument of preparing the student to deal with real problems of life has gained a popular hearing, with the result that fads and vocational training are strangling the three R's. All this is attested by the sad state of the language employed by the great body of pupils everywhere. The point is well made that it is just as important for a boy to know how to use good language as it is for him to know how to draw and to make a flower pot. As he says, the one lesson needed now above all others is "immediate and willing obedience to constituted authority." He holds that high-school and college students are untrained and inefficient, this being due to narrow specialization and haphazard election in studies. "We need to get back to the humanities—not to the humanities of Greece and Rome, as expounded at Oxford and in some universities in America, but to the humanities of the twentieth century. For the study of the real humanities implies a working knowledge of mankind—of man." To ignore the part recently played by Oxford men is to argue one's self profoundly ignorant of facts. Will intelligent teachers allow such stupid statements to go unchallenged?

For some time past the editor of the *Oxford Magazine* has been overwhelmed by letters from correspondents dealing with the Greek question. The recent issues of this magazine contain discussions of this problem from every conceivable point of view. For instance, a soldier returned from the front heartily resents the common cry that the war has taught us to want what is useful. In a letter, November 7, we seem to have a critical situation revealed analogous to what has developed in our own country in recent years. The writer, Mr. H. J. Paton, thinks that now the main object of compulsory Greek is to

prevent its being banished from the smaller schools. While admitting that this method of saving Greek is clumsy, yet he thinks that the end at stake justifies it. At any rate, he insists, before giving up compulsory Greek, the university should see to two things. In the first place, some sort of scheme should be worked out to provide at least one teacher of Greek in every educational community so that every boy and girl shall still have an opportunity to study it. And in the second place, a thing of even greater importance, as he sees it, a wider and more liberal education should be provided in connection with modern subjects. He holds that the modern schools are overspecialized, and do not at the present time, like the school of *literae humaniores*, offer an opportunity for studying with thoroughness the language, literature, history, and philosophy of two or even of one country. Until such a school has been established, the old *literae humaniores* must be retained even in face of the now resounding cry that it is for those alone who belong to the higher social scale.

The *Journal of Education* for November contains the summary of a paper, "The Teaching of English," read by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch before the Educational Science Section of the British Association which met at Bournemouth in September. Emphasis is laid upon the value of English for English-speaking people and a strong plea is made for its having a prominent place in education. The thesis is upheld that training in one's native tongue is of first importance, however many other languages one may know. The text taken is the "conjecture propounded by Don Quixote to Don Diego de Miranda that the divine Homer wrote in Greek and not in Latin because Greek happened to be his native tongue." Sir Arthur holds that as a man speaks best in the language in which he habitually thinks, English should not be treated as a "special subject," but should form the basis of all instruction where it is the native tongue. Of the five main branches of learning—languages, mathematics, natural science, history, literature—he is inclined to think that too much time is given to linguistics and to mathematics. "Until a child reach fourteen or fifteen let him practice the language natural to his mind, and one other: and let him practise English so that it be equally serviceable to him in his later studies, whether he go on to specialize in literature, history, natural science, or aught else." What other language, then, shall the child study? "I vote for Greek," says Sir Arthur. Among the reasons given is the fact that Greek is the language of the New Testament on which we base our Christian morality, and it is likewise the basis of modern scientific nomenclature. "Greek has—over Latin, at any rate—three tremendous advantages. (1) It is, as the Romans themselves confessed, an incomparably finer language, at once more copious and more delicate. (2) It is the key to an incomparably finer literature. (3) Whereas 'easy' authors in Latin are sadly uninteresting, in Greek one can get the child interested at once in Homer, in Herodotus, in the Gospels—three of the most fascinating works in the world, whatever else we may add in their praise."